

**Angels in the Bible**  
**Sermon Dec 31, 2017**

**The Missionary and His Heavenly Helpers**

A long time ago, I read a book written by John Gibson Paton. He was born in Scotland and was an ordained Presbyterian minister. The Reverend John G. Paton felt a call for missionary work. After he completed his education and training in medicine, he and his wife, Jenny, moved to the New Hebrides Islands, which is east of Australia, where they lived in a small room which looked like a shed. Daily, they were faced with disease, deadly animals and fierce natives. But they knew and believed that God sent them there, and God was in charge. They found many opportunities to hold Bible studies and to teach the local tribes about their faith, and about our Lord Jesus Christ. On that island, there was one tribe known for their fighting. In the past, they had killed quite a few missionaries. Reverend John heard that this tribe made plans to kill them as well.

On the night of June 23, 1873, Reverend John, his wife and their family sat in their tiny place and listened to the sound of war cries outside their shed which was growing louder and louder.

“They’re coming for us, John,” the terrified wife whispered to her husband. John nodded and said “Pray Jenny, talk to God, keep praying!”

Then John began to pray aloud. “Heavenly Father You have commanded us to come to You in time of need, and to ask for Your intervention. We come before You now and ask You to protect us as You have so many times in the past. Please deliver us from the danger we are in. In Your name we pray, amen.”

For nearly an hour, the threatening war sounds continued. About an hour later, Reverend John noticed some dancing lights around their place. “Fire!” John whispered, holding his wife in his arms. “Keep praying Jenny! I think they are going to try and burn us out.”

John and Jenny continued to pray for protection. Then the screaming and yelling sounds began to lessen and it seemed that the tribe left their area. The minister and his family had no explanation for why the tribesmen had chosen not to kill them that terrifying night.

Next day, the chief and some members of his tribe visited the missionaries in a very peaceful manner.

John decided to ask the Chief why they didn't kill them that night. "We tried," said the Chief, "but your guards wouldn't let us past." Then the Chief asked Reverend John to show them where they are hiding their guards. "What guards?" asked Reverend John. The chief waved his arms dramatically, saying: "Hundreds of guards, big men in shiny clothes with swords drawn and with torches, who surrounded your hut. We had no choice so we left," said the Chief.

Now, let me recall to you the story in the Bible, found in 2 Kings, Chapter 6 which we heard before. The King of Syria wanted to kill the prophet Elisha and his helper, because Elisha the prophet was able to see where and how the enemy wanted to attack Israel.

Once, in the morning, the helper noticed that their city was filled with a large Syrian army. Elisha was in peace as he calmed his helper saying: "Don't be afraid, our army is bigger than theirs." Elisha could see God's great army of angels already in place, ready to protect both him and his helper. Elisha prayed that God would open the eyes of his young helper, that he also might be able to see the hosts of protective angels there to protect them. God answered the prayer of Elisha! The young man's eyes were opened and as he looked around he "could see horses and chariots of fire everywhere on the hills surrounding the city."

After the Chief who had tried to kill Rev. Paton heard the story from the Bible, he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour.

In 845 B.C., God had sent His angels to protect Elisha and his helper, and in the same way in 1873 God sent his angels to protect Reverend John and Jenny Paton.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, Reverend John Victor, a Hungarian Reformed minister was hiding 60 Jews in a basement apartment to save their lives not to be deported. He knew that if they were discovered, those people, including him and his family, would be executed. Once, early on a winter morning, he heard on the radio that in his area German soldiers were going from home to home, trying to find hidden Jews. He decided to join the Jews and to be there in that moment when they might be found. As he was running to the apartment, he prayed: "Father, you promised

that you can provide us extra protection. Please help these people. They did not do anything wrong”.

As Reverend John approached the house where those 60 Jews were hidden, in the pitch dark night, John saw an amazing huge shining light coming from the sky towards the house where these people were hiding. Then he saw, as he described, a 4-5 meter tall very shiny man with a sword standing in front of that house. Rev. John went on his knees in that one foot deep snow and praised God for His protection. Those people were saved.

About 25 years ago, my colleague, Rev. Peter Szabo, shared this story with his congregation in Montreal. As he started to unfold the story, one elderly lady started to cry very loudly. At the end, she stood up saying: “I was in that basement room as a child with my parent and siblings.”

As the Lord protected Elisa and his helper, John and his wife. and also those 60 Jews in Budapest, God is able to send a host of angels to protect each and every one of us if we fully trust in Him and we do His will. And the turning point is “**IF**”.

**The Bible says “He will give His angels charge of you, to guard you in all your ways.” Psalm 91:11.** God has commissioned His angels to protect His children and at the end of our lives to escort each believer to Heaven and to give us a royal welcome as we enter the eternal presence of God.

I am sure that during the passing year we were thousand times in different dangerous situations, and we did not even realize how many times we could lose our safety and our lives. But God was there with His angels and we were not harmed because they were protecting us by God’s order.

I don’t know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future. Amen